

Citizen comment on how radio and TV are serving our communities:

Recently, a major corporate owner of television stations, Sinclair Broadcasting, ordered their 62 stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary just days before the election. This is a clear effort to influence the election, and an example of the dangers of media consolidation. Media consolidation has been increasing in recent years and it is a great danger to our democracy because it limits and distorts the information we receive.

Companies that use the public airwaves, by law, have a duty to serve the public interest. This kind of blatantly partisan, election-oriented, manipulative behavior by a corporation's management is NOT in the public interest.

Corporate efforts to influence the public's political behavior are getting more and more overt. Fox News is of course a prime example. Also, networks increasingly limit access for opinions their corporate ad-purchasers will not approve of. For instance, networks have refused to run paid ads (such as ads advocating more fuel-efficient cars) that offended large ad customers (such as the auto industry).

The corporations expect to get away with this increasing control over the public airwaves. They do not expect the FCC to intervene on the public's behalf.

Please prove them wrong.

We, the citizens, need the FCC to strictly enforce the limits on corporate ownership (number of stations, market percentage). This has not been done. We need stricter limits on ownership, particularly ownership of various media within a given market. And we need a return to the Fairness Doctrine.

Thank you.